

# MISSOURI SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY PANEL

*Advising the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education on  
Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*

**Chair**

Michael Hanrahan

**Vice Chair**

Kent Kolaga

**Secretary**

Joan Zavitsky

To Whom It May Concern:

This Annual Report of Missouri's Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) is hereby offered for public review. Although the Advisory Panel undertakes its responsibilities with a sense of duty and humility; it is with pride that we present this document.

The Advisory Panel is composed of individuals representing a wide spectrum of stakeholders and stakeholder groups. The role of the Advisory Panel is to review programs and activities of Missouri's Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) relevant to special education. The Advisory Panel will make requests for additional information and make recommendations where appropriate in a collaborative effort with DESE. The ultimate goal is to assist in providing Missouri's students in special education with programs and assistance to enable them to be successful in their academic careers and adult life.

The Advisory Panel wishes to recognize the support and assistance of DESE staff including Deborah Parsons, Coordinator of Special Education Services, and Lina Browner, Executive Assistant for the Division of Special Education. The Panel thanks other DESE staff for their assistance through a variety of presentations, informational support, and periodic attendance at Panel meetings.

Meetings of the Advisory Panel are open to the public and we welcome guests who wish to either observe Panel meetings and/or make comments relevant to our duties.

If you have needs as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act and need this publication in an alternative format, call 573-751-5739. Efforts will be made to accommodate your needs.

Sincerely,

Mike Hanrahan  
Chairperson

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*The Division's services are primarily supported by federal funds appropriated in accordance  
with provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102

# **Missouri Special Education Advisory Panel**

## **Annual Report**

**Michael Hanrahan, Chair  
Fiscal Year 2001-2002**





# Missouri Special Education Advisory Panel Annual Report

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## Introduction

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This annual report of the Missouri Special Education Advisory Panel is respectfully submitted to the Commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) for the State of Missouri. The reporting period is July 1, 2001, through June 30, 2002.

The report is a summary of panel activities and recommendations during the reporting period. The panel convenes on a regular basis to review issues pertinent to special education in Missouri and to advise DESE on these issues. The panel operates in a collaborative spirit with DESE's Division of Special Education in identifying and addressing issues of concern.

Additional information about the panel can be found at: [dese.mo.gov/divspeced/Administration/AdvisoryPanel/94142mainpage.html](http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/Administration/AdvisoryPanel/94142mainpage.html). Comments about this report may be submitted by mail to the Special Education Advisory Panel Chairperson, Division of Special Education, P.O. Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102 or via e-mail to the contact listed at the above Web site.

The panel wishes to acknowledge the contributions of Melodie Friedebach, Debby Parsons and Lina Browner, along with other DESE staff, for their assistance in providing essential information through a variety of reports and presentations.

## Missouri's Vision for Special Education Services

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We, the people of Missouri, believe that diversity enhances our culture; therefore, we commit our resources and efforts to accept, educate and support all children and youth. All children and youth, being of diverse backgrounds and abilities, will have access to all learning activities with accommodations and supports to enable them to succeed. All children and youth are actively engaged in creating their own futures; are prepared for life as independent, informed and empowered citizens; and are embraced as vital, valued and contributing members of their communities. Therefore, we need inclusive communities and schools that:

- recognize that all children and youth can learn;

- commit to providing equitable opportunities for all children and youth;
- build on the individual strengths and abilities of each child and youth;
- collaborate for the benefit of all children and youth; and
- recognize and involve families as full partners.

Members of the advisory panel agree with and are committed to this vision. We believe that all children in special education are entitled to and deserving of fair and equitable treatment by the educational system. We believe that both students and local school districts should be held to the highest standards and that all children should receive both an appropriate and quality education to prepare them for life beyond the school years.

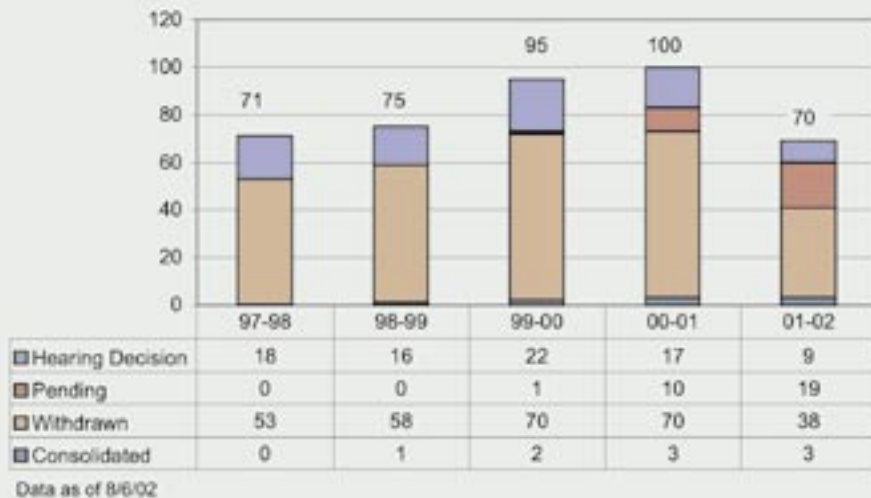
The panel recognizes that there have always been and will continue to be challenges in providing an appropriate education for each individual student. It is the firm belief and commitment of this panel that the needs of the individual student should be the prime concern of those involved in creating an individualized program. The panel feels a strong responsibility to represent the interests of all students in special education in achieving the best possible outcomes for them in the educational process. The best outcomes can be achieved when all stakeholders work together in a collaborative manner for the best interests of the individual student.

## Data Reviews

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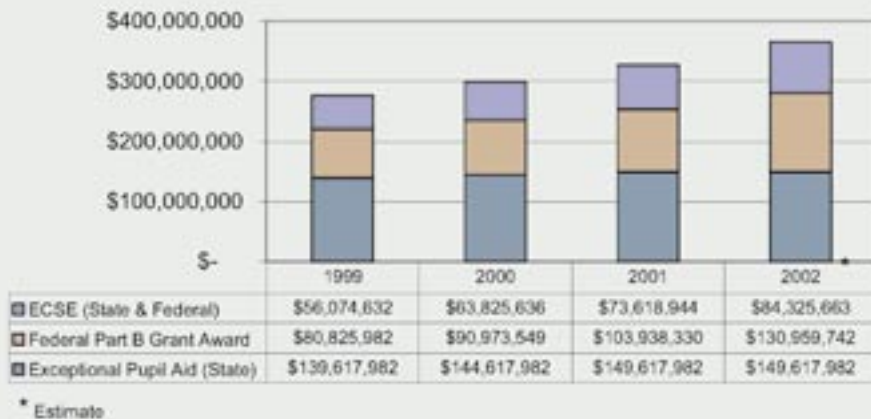
The advisory panel attempts to review a number of issues and Division initiatives during the fiscal year. The panel members feel that they can best represent students in special education by being well-informed on a variety of special education issues. Each year the panel will review special education data as we monitor the status of Missouri's special education. Following is a listing of the goals and objectives reviewed by the panel. The following section includes the special education and performance goal data reviewed by the panel.

### Due Process Hearing Requests by Fiscal Year



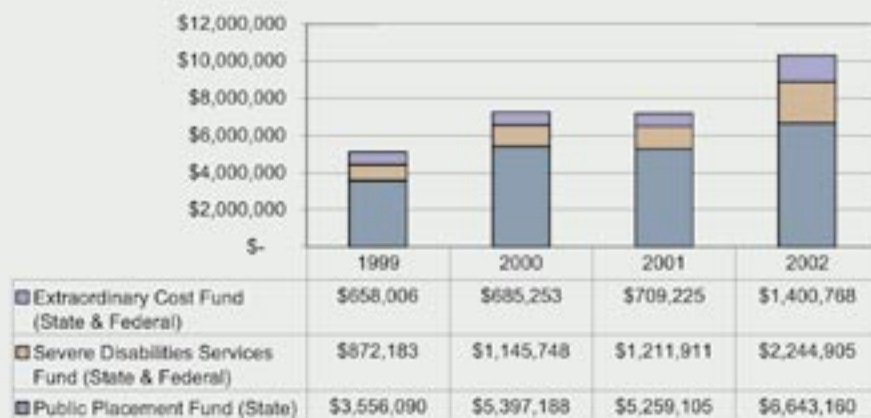
Due process findings and decisions are shared with the advisory panel on an annual basis. Decisions can be found on the Division of Special Education Web site.

### Special Education Funding by Year



Missouri serves 141,524 students with disabilities ages 3 through 22 in 524 public school districts, State Schools for Severely Handicapped (SSSH), Missouri School for the Blind (MSB), Missouri School for the Deaf (MSD), Department of Corrections (DOC), and Division of Youth Services (DYS). The major funding sources and amounts for special education are shown.

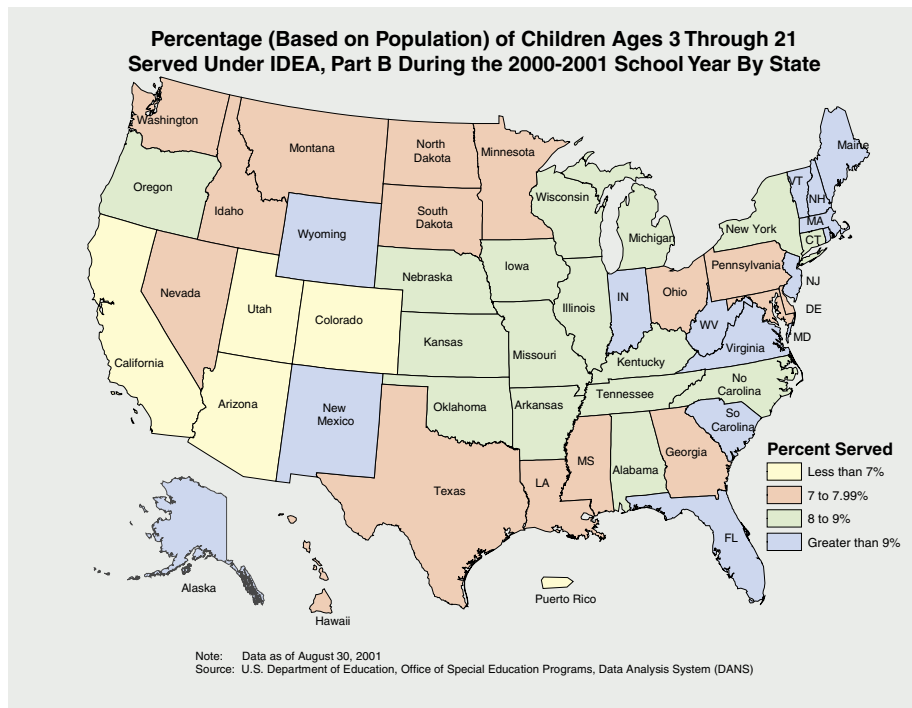
### Special Purpose Funds Distributions



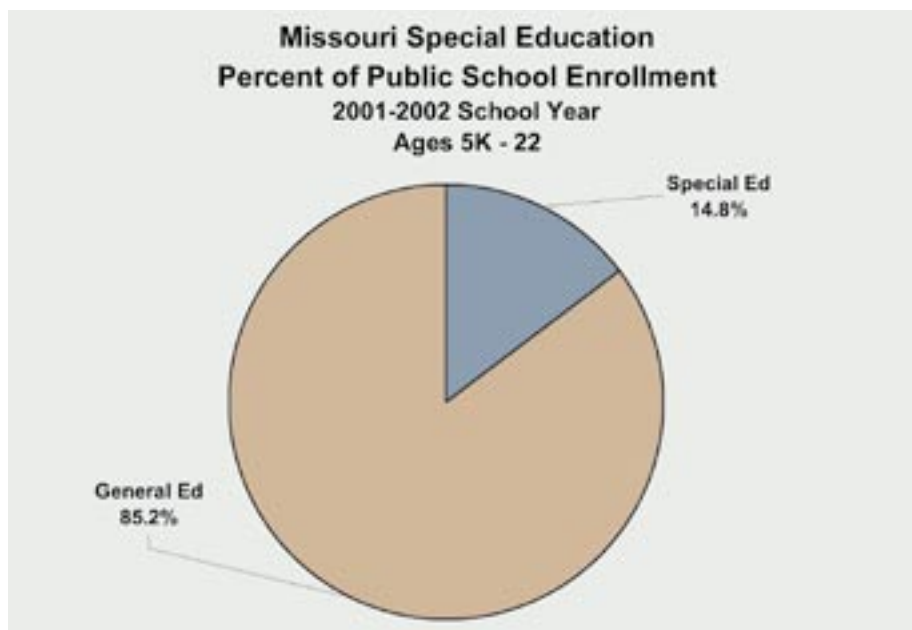
The Extraordinary Cost Fund allows local districts with the greatest need to have first access to the fund to meet extraordinary costs.

## Special Education Student Data

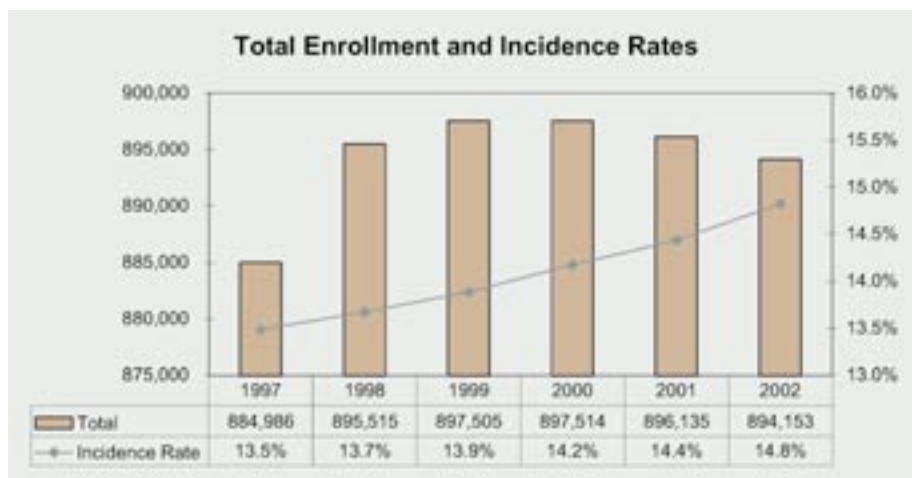
The incidence rate of students ages 3 through 21 with disabilities was compared for all 50 states. Missouri was between 8 percent and 9 percent with calculations based on population.



During the 2001-2002 school year, Missouri public schools served 132,517 students ages 5 through 22 with disabilities. This represents approximately 14.82 percent of the students enrolled in public schools.

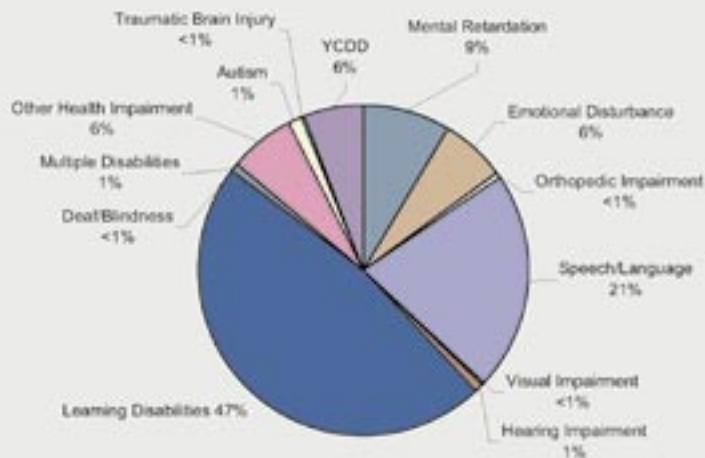


The incidence of students with disabilities is continuing to increase while the enrollment in Missouri public schools is declining. Enrollment data for students in private and home schools is not included.



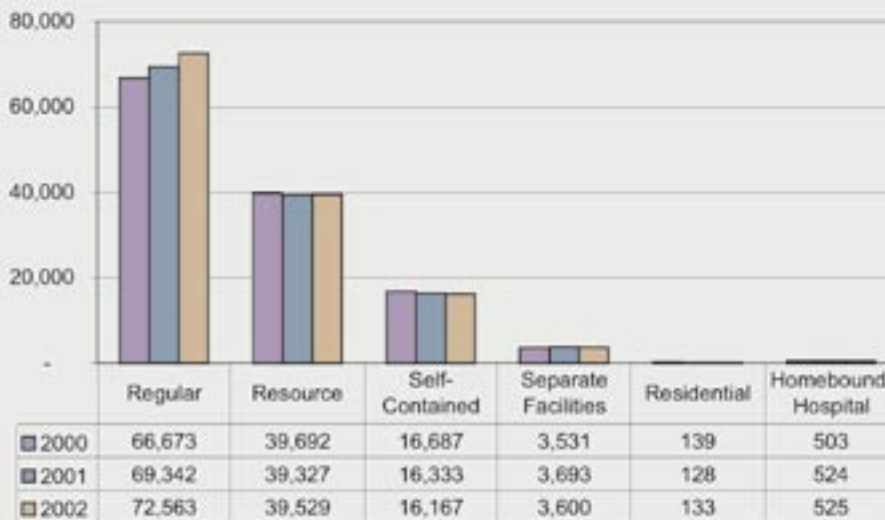


### Disabilities Percent of Total (Ages 3-22) 2001-2002 School Year



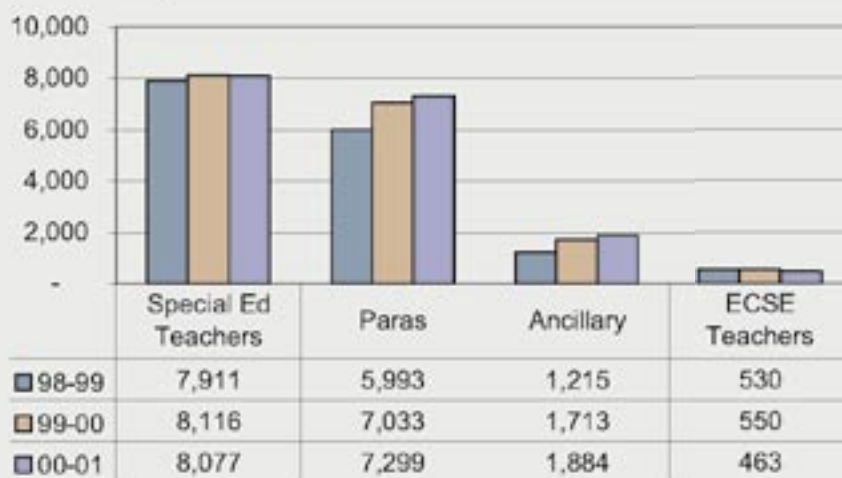
Students with disabilities are diagnosed by Missouri public schools based on the definitions and eligibility criteria included in the Missouri State Plan.

### Placement Counts by Year



Missouri students with disabilities receive their special education services in a variety of settings within the public schools. The Division of Special Education collects and reports to the federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) data on the amount of time students with disabilities are removed from the general education classroom. This data is summarized in six placement categories. Since the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1997, Missouri has seen a steady increase in the use of Regular Classroom. Students in this placement are removed less than 21 percent of the school day, or a little more than one hour per day, from their general education classrooms.

### Special Education Personnel



Special education personnel serving students with disabilities were presented in four broad categories: Special Education Teachers, which includes all categorical areas that serve school-age students from 5k through 22; Paraprofessionals serving students ages 3 through 22; Ancillary Personnel serving students ages 3 through 22; and Early Childhood Special Education Teachers serving ECSE students ages 3 through 6.

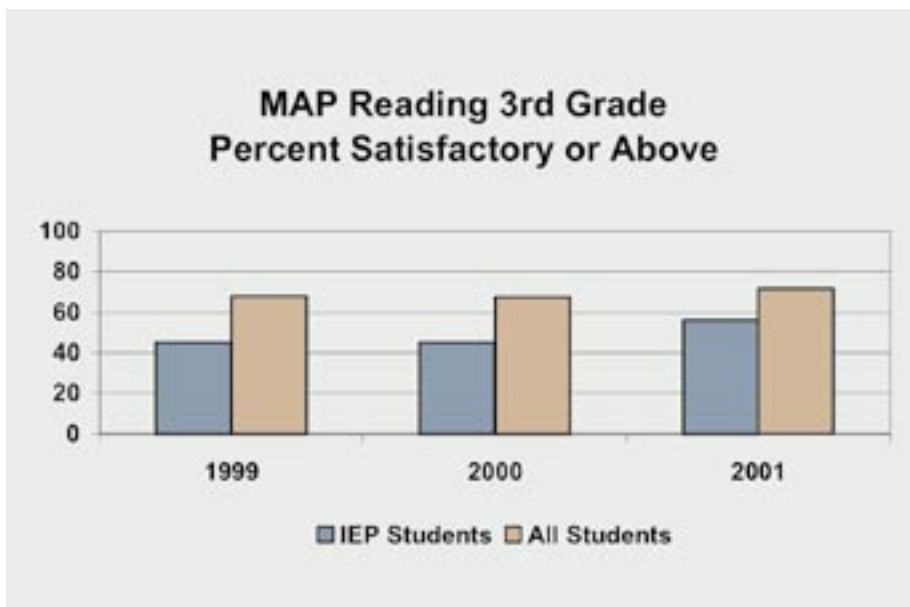


## Performance Goals and Indicators

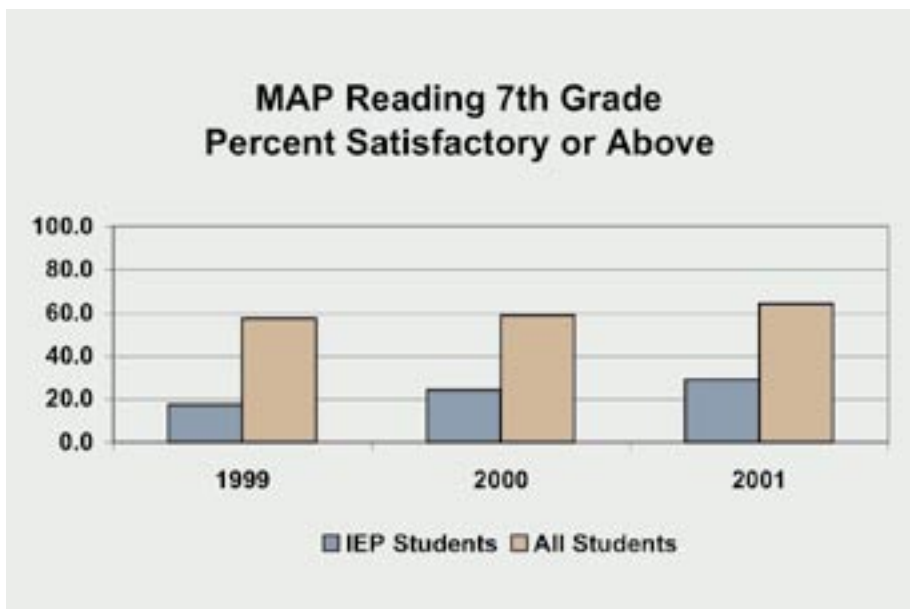
Missouri is continuing to monitor the progress toward our performance goals for students with disabilities.

**Goal:** Increase the percentage of proficient readers in grades 3 and 7 and decrease the percentage having the Missouri Assessment Program — Communications Arts (MAP-CA) read to them

Reading proficiency continues to increase for elementary-age students.

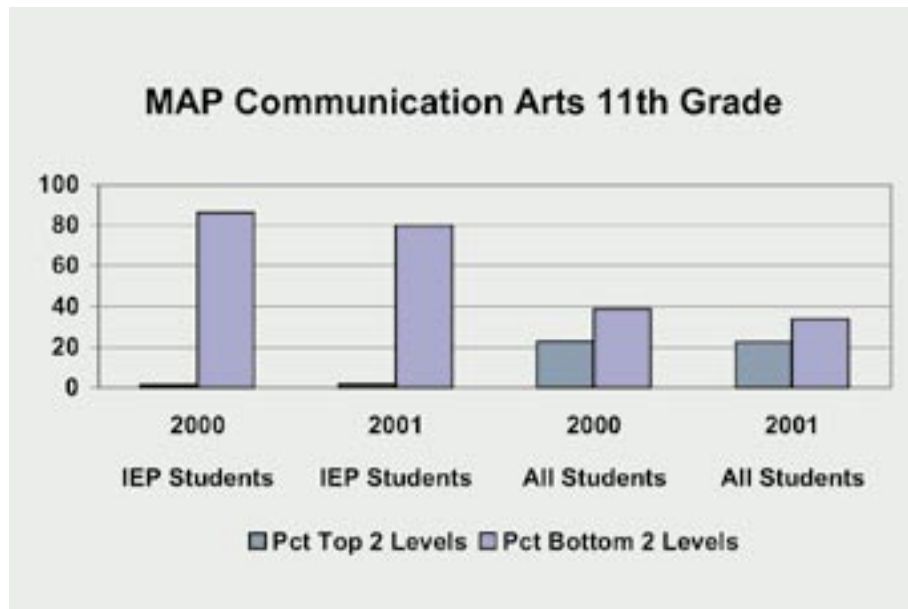


Reading proficiency is increasing at the middle school level for students with disabilities but lags far behind rates for all students.

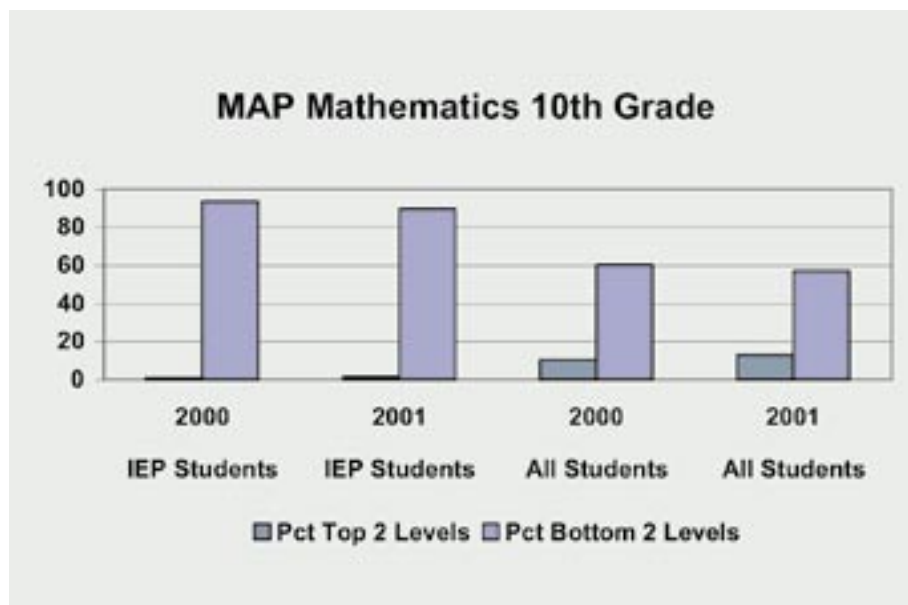


**Goal:** Increase the percentage scoring at Proficient and Advanced levels and decrease the percentage scoring at Step 1 and Progressing levels for each of the MAP subject-area assessments

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High school level results show that most students with disabilities are scoring in the bottom two achievement levels on the MAP exams.

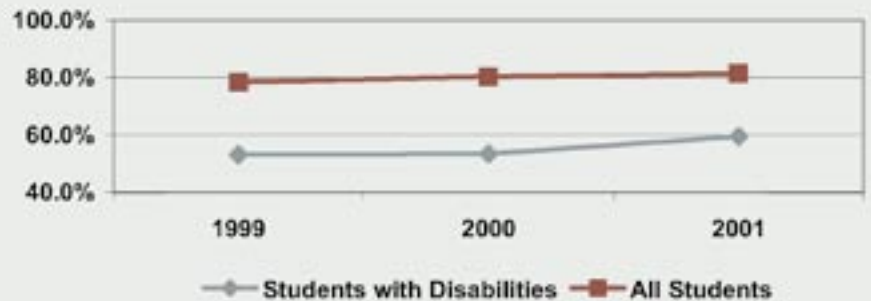


Large gaps are seen between students with disabilities and all students.

***Goal: Increase the percentage graduating with a regular diploma***

Graduation rates are calculated for all districts in Missouri for students in grades 9 through 12. The Division of Special Education uses a similar method based on the exiting information that is collected for students with disabilities ages 14 through 22. While there are slight differences in the manner that these calculations are made, this is currently the best means to compare the graduation rates for all students with the graduation rates for students with disabilities.

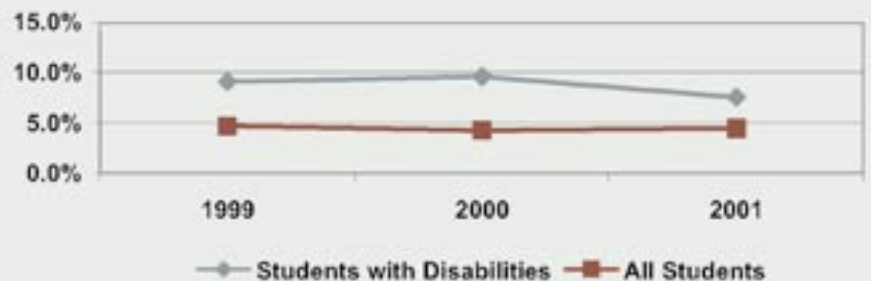
**Graduation Rates for Students with Disabilities and All Students**  
(Excludes DOC, DYS and SOPs)



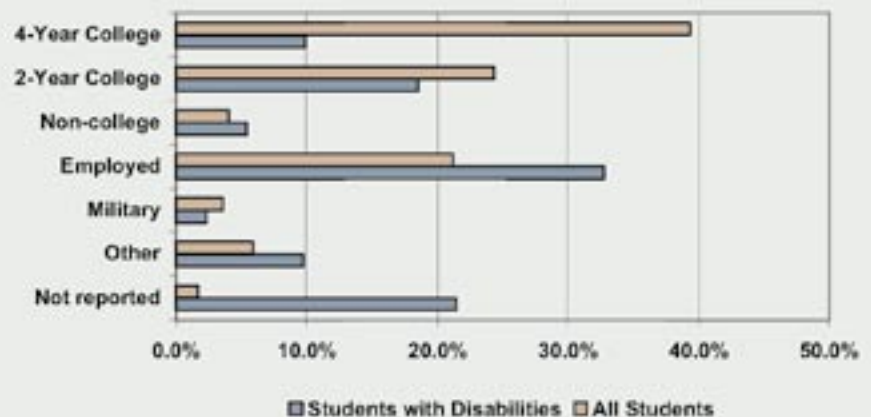
***Goal: Decrease the percentage that drop out of school***

Dropout rates are calculated for all districts in Missouri for students in grades 9 through 12. The Division of Special Education uses a similar method based on the exiting information that is collected for students with disabilities ages 14 through 22. While there are slight differences in the way these calculations are made, this is currently the best means to compare the dropout rates for all students with the dropout rates for students with disabilities.

**Dropout Rates for Students with Disabilities and All Students**  
(Excludes DOC, DYS and SOPs)



**Post-Graduation Follow-up of 2000 Graduates**



School districts conduct follow-up activities for all students six months post-graduation. Currently districts are reporting on approximately 78 percent of the students with disabilities who graduated.

## Panel Activities

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The panel engages in a number of activities to fulfill its role of advising the Division on special education issues. In addition to reviewing data, the panel schedules a number of presentations on special education topics.

## Missouri Self-Assessment Process

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The federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) is monitoring all states, including Missouri, regarding their compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The process is referred to as the CIMP, or Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process.

The CIMP process begins with Self-Assessment. Missouri is being asked to conduct extensive research to determine how well we are doing as a state in meeting the needs of children and youth in special education and in our compliance with IDEA.

OSEP identified a number of “cluster areas” as having the greatest potential for impacting the outcomes for infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities. The cluster areas identified by OSEP for Part B of IDEA are: General Supervision, Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment, Parent Involvement, Secondary Transition, and Transition from Part C to Part B. In addition to these areas, the Missouri Division of Special Education has established a cluster area focused on special education services for pre-school children.

In Missouri, the Special Education Advisory Panel has assumed a leadership role in this process by serving as the steering committee for the Part B cluster areas. The initial steps in this process were reported in the 2000-2001 Annual Report. The work in this area has continued during the 2001-2002 fiscal year. The final report to OSEP is due on Oct. 18, 2002. Below is a listing of highlights of this process during the reporting period:

- A conference call with Larry Ringer of the Office of Special Education Programs in Washington, D.C. During the phone conference, Ringer praised Missouri for the quality of work on Self-Assessment and identified OSEP’s vision for the steering

committee. He assisted the panel in understanding our role and what OSEP expects in the Assessment Report.

- Reports from representatives of each cluster area advising the panel of areas reviewed and data gaps identified. Following this was a work session facilitated by Carol Daniels of the Great Lakes Area Regional Resource Center (GLARRC).
- A review of the cluster committee reports during which additional data gaps were identified and specific questions were referred back to the cluster committees for additional review. *Note:* The cluster committees met again in late June, and their findings will be addressed in next year’s Annual Report.
- A decision was made to contract with the Office of Social and Economic Data Analysis (OSED) at the University of Missouri–Columbia to assist in developing and conducting satisfaction surveys for parents as part of the Self-Assessment process. In addition, it was determined that there would be a series of meetings with parents (focus groups) to gather additional information for the process.

During the early part of the fiscal 2002-2003 year, the panel will participate in reviewing the final cluster committee reports and assist in writing the Self-Assessment report for OSEP.

## Adoption of a Follow-up Tracking Procedure

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The panel adopted a formal process for tracking recommendations made to DESE on issues regarding special education. The purpose of this process is to follow the progress on recommended actions to DESE. In the past, it was noted that the panel often did not know the results of recommendations. The new process will allow the panel to track the progress of future recommendations. This will be of special importance as the panel undertakes the “improvement” phase of the CIMP.

## Selection of a New Assistant Commissioner for Special Education

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During the fiscal year, Stephen Barr, assistant commissioner for special education, retired. The panel proposed that its members be allowed to participate in the selection process for the position. Orlo Shroyer, DESE deputy commissioner, attended the January SEAP meeting and invited the panel to submit questions for the replacement interview process. A motion was made that the panel chair be allowed to participate in the interview process. The panel chair was advised that the request was accepted, and the chair did participate in the interviews. The panel is pleased to announce that Melodie Friedebach was selected as the new assistant commissioner.

## Special Presentations to the Panel

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The panel members feel that in order to fulfill their role of advising DESE on issues regarding special education, they need to be informed and up to date on all facets of the special education process in Missouri. Therefore, the panel scheduled a number of presentations provided by persons involved in specific areas of special education. Below is a listing and brief synopsis of presentations during the reporting period:

### November:

- The panel was addressed by Margaret Strecker of DESE regarding Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE). She advised that in 1990 the governor of Missouri mandated that the state would provide services for children ages 3 to the beginning of kindergarten. The presentation included information on the number of children involved the past three years and program expenditures. She also explained effective practices DESE has promoted for ECSE and the differences in regulations for the ages 3 to 5 population as compared to other Part B students. There was also discussion of the new developmental delay definition adopted for the state.

### January:

- Lynda Roberts of the Department of Corrections updated the panel on how education (particularly special education) is handled in Missouri. She presented a video and handouts describing education provided in Corrections and procedures developed to address special education needs.
- Roy Miller, executive director for the Missouri Commission for the Deaf (MCD), discussed the new Missouri Interpreter Certification System (MICS) rules and how they affect educational interpreters in Missouri. Also assisting in the presentation were Amy Fowler, MICS coordinator, and Roger Brown, MCD interpreter.
- Joyce Jackman, assistant director of the Special Education Compliance Section, addressed the panel on issues surrounding speech therapy and the Standards for Speech Implementers in Missouri.

### March:

- Sandy Wadley, supervisor of the Teacher Certification Section, Division of Teacher Quality and Urban Education, addressed the panel on Missouri's teacher certification process and requirements.

### May:

- Karen Allen, supervisor, Special Education Effective Practices Section, discussed with the panel the proposed rule change on student services certificates for speech implementers. DESE has recognized the need for speech implementers and needs to review their certification.

## SEAP Subcommittees

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The Panel has a number of ongoing subcommittees designed to research and report to the panel on issues relevant to various aspects of special education. Each subcommittee is expected to meet periodically and advise the panel on possible recommendations to DESE. The current subcommittees are:

- SIG (State Improvement Grants): The State Improvement Grant (SIG) committee reviewed all the previous Annual Performance Reports and provided

several suggested refinements to its format. These were recommended by the panel and adopted by DESE for its report due January 2002. DESE also invited the panel to make recommendations as to the use of carryover funds.

- Deaf/Hard of Hearing: Gay Jones is chair. This committee met once during the year and stressed to the panel the importance of breaking down deaf education by age and grade levels and the critical element of language acquisition.
- Student Assessment: Cathy Meyer is chair. This committee did not meet during the reporting year but will have an integral role in the Continuous Improvement process.
- Legislative Review: Deana O'Brien is chair. This committee is working on a system to keep the panel updated on legislative issues related to education through a listserv.
- Certification: Eileen Huth is chair. This committee did not meet during the reporting year.

In addition to the ongoing subcommittees, there are a number of Ad Hoc subcommittees designed to work on specific, short-term areas of concern.

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## Future Focus

The 2003 fiscal year will bring unusual challenges to the advisory panel but will also present unique opportunities. Missouri's Self-Assessment is scheduled for completion in October 2002. When finished, the Self-Assessment will be submitted to OSEP for review. It is anticipated that OSEP will respond with comments and recommendations in early 2003. This document will serve as a baseline for the panel when moving into the improvement phase of the CIMP.

In the meantime, the panel will begin its own analysis of Missouri's Self-Assessment and begin the process of prioritizing areas in need of improvement and developing recommendations to DESE to address identified needs. This process will consume the bulk of the panel's time in the coming year. However, the panel will continue to seek other opportunities to be of assistance to the Division of Special Education.

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## Closing

There are children with disabilities throughout Missouri's educational system. These children encounter an environment they find frightening and intimidating. They are caught up in a world of swirling sights, sounds, words and figures they often find mysterious and confusing. Most will be the target of cruel words and actions from some of their peers. They will come from families overwhelmed by the impact of their child's disability on their lives. The families, too, will sometimes find the educational system confusing and intimidating. They will come to the school system for guidance and assistance in dealing with their child's disability and the desire for the proper education for their child. They need our understanding and our best efforts. We must not fail them.

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## Advisory Panel Duties

The advisory panel is authorized under Public Law 94-142 (IDEA). The purpose of the panel is to provide policy guidance on special education and related services and to carry out those specific and general functions set forth in the above referenced statutes. The panel shall: 1) advise the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education of unmet needs within the state in the education of children with disabilities; 2) comment publicly on any rules or regulations proposed by the state regarding the education of children with disabilities; 3) advise DESE in developing evaluations and reporting on data to the U.S. Office of Education under Section 618 of the Act; 4) advise DESE in developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in federal monitoring reports under Part B of the Act; and 5) advise DESE in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.



## 2001-2002 Membership Roster

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Stephen Barr, Jefferson City  
Dan Colgan, St. Joseph  
Dennis Gragg, Jefferson City  
Patricia Grassa, Springfield  
Michael Hanrahan, Cameron  
Patricia Henley, Kansas City  
Eileen Huth, Ballwin  
Patricia Jackson, Raytown  
Janet Jacoby, Kansas City  
Gay Jones, Independence  
Kent Kolaga, Jefferson City  
Scott Mantooth, Jefferson City  
Steve McDannold, Moberly  
Cathy Meyer, St. Louis  
Tara Morrow, Florissant  
Linda Murrell, Florissant  
Deana O'Brien, California  
Eric Remelius, Columbia  
Lynda Roberts, Jefferson City  
Robin Rust, Jefferson City

Virginia Ryan, Carthage  
Barbara Scheidegger, Jefferson City  
Patti Simcosky, Independence  
Richard Staley, Winfield  
Stephen Viola, St. Louis  
Dennis Von Allmen, West Plains  
Pam Walls, Sedgewickville  
Raymond Wicks, St. Louis  
Dee Wyckoff, Kansas City  
Joan Zavitsky, Eureka

## Terms

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AT — Assistive Technology  
CIMP — Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process  
DESE — Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  
DOC — Department of Corrections  
DFS — Division of Family Services  
DYS — Division of Youth Services  
ECSE — Early Childhood Special Education  
EPA — Exceptional Pupil Aid  
ESY — Extended School Year  
FAPE — Free Appropriate Public Education  
FERPA — Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act  
IDEA — Individuals with Disabilities Education Act  
IEP — Individualized Education Program  
LIG — Local Improvement Grant  
LRE — Least Restrictive Environment  
MAP — Missouri Assessment Program  
MSB — Missouri School for the Blind  
MSD — Missouri School for the Deaf

OSEP — Office of Special Education Programs  
Para — Paraprofessional  
SIG — State Improvement Grant  
SSSH — State Schools for Severely Handicapped



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Missouri Department  
of Elementary and Secondary Education